

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 20, 2014

Her Excellency Helle Thorning-Schmidt  
Prime Minister of Denmark  
Christiansborg  
Prins Jørgens Gård 11  
1218 København K  
København, Denmark

Dear Prime Minister Thorning-Schmidt:

As friends of Denmark and supporters of religious freedom, we are disappointed by the new Danish law that effectively bans kosher and halal slaughter practices. In our view, the law has a negative impact on religious freedom in Denmark, and must be addressed as soon as possible.

While we share Denmark's concerns over animal rights, strict rules have developed over the millennia in Judaism and Islam to ensure that kosher and halal slaughter are both humane and minimize undue animal suffering. With that, we stand with the Chief Rabbi of Denmark and Muslim and Jewish organizations across Europe to request that the Danish government annul the ban on kosher and halal slaughter. The law currently impedes Denmark's estimated 250,000 Muslims and 6,000 Jews from following the tenets of their faiths.

As respectful friends of Denmark, we welcome the opportunity to meet with you or your designee to discuss this issue in greater detail. We also stand ready to help you identify a solution that accommodates legitimate concerns about the humane treatment of animals, but also upholds the religious liberties that both Danes and Americans hold dear.

Sincerely,



Eliot L. Engel  
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress